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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
(30.6.2025)

Dismantling criminal networks involved in migrant smuggling is a key priority for the Commission. Within its competences, the Commission supports Member States not only through direct coordination of relevant response policies on the ground, but also by leveraging the resources of EU agencies, such as the European Border and Coast Guard Agency through the deployment of Standing Corps, and the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) through the deployment of guest officers in support of secondary security checks and migrant smuggling investigations.

The Commission highly encourages and supports the effective cooperation in a whole-of-a-route approach, between on the one side countries of origin and transit and on the other side destination countries in the EU, to ensure effective interventions to prevent and counter irregular migration. Such measures are pursued as part of the renewed EU action plan against migrant smuggling (2021-2025)¹ and the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats² policy cycle.

Moreover, in November 2023, the Commission launched a Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling³ along three key pillars - prevention, response and alternatives - and proposed to strengthen the EU legal framework⁴ and the role of Europol⁵ to ensure that the EU has the necessary legal and operational instruments to respond to this evolving crime.

The Commission has also reached out to transport operators and partner countries and proposed a Regulation to take measures against transport operators⁶ and provided a toolbox addressing the use of commercial means of transport to facilitate irregular migration to the EU⁷.

¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions A renewed EU action plan against migrant smuggling (2021-2025), COM(2021) 591 final.

² https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/internal-security/law-enforcement-cooperation/empact-fighting-crime-together_en.

³ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/document/download/60f6cc08-c7ee-46db-bee5-689562d34436_en?filename=Call-to-action-global-alliance-to-counter-migrant-smuggling_en_1.pdf.

⁴ Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down minimum rules to prevent and counter the facilitation of unauthorised entry, transit and stay in the Union, and replacing Council Directive 2002/90/EC and Council Framework Decision 2002/946 JHA, COM(2023) 755 final.

⁵ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on enhancing police cooperation in relation to the prevention, detection and investigation of migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, and on enhancing Europol's support to preventing and combating such crimes and amending Regulation (EU) 2016/794, COM(2023) 754 final.

⁶ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on measures against transport operators that facilitate or engage in trafficking in persons or smuggling of migrants in relation to illegal entry into the territory of the European Union, COM(2021) 753 final.

⁷ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/toolbox-addressing-use-commercial-means-transport-facilitate-irregular-migration-eu_en.